

## REPORT OF THE COUNCIL.

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Since the last meeting of the Society the thought and energy of the President and of the Librarian and his assistants have been mainly occupied in moving the contents of the older building to the newest. The literary material belonging to the Society has been arranged sufficiently to enable the executive officers to produce it readily for the use of inquirers, excepting the contents of the map and manuscript rooms. These, it is hoped, will be arranged before the next annual meeting of the Society.

At its March meeting the Council voted to have the President, or a substitute appointed by him, represent the Society in the American Year Book Corporation. Mr. Lincoln attended a meeting of that corporation later in the month.

At the same meeting it was voted to ask Messrs. Winship, Brigham, and Ford to serve as a permanent committee to report occasionally to the Council the names of scholars especially eligible for membership in the Society.

The volume of "Royal Proclamations relating to America," edited by the Librarian, is now in the printer's hands.

It has been necessary to discontinue for the present the work of Mr. Charles H. Lincoln on the manuscripts. He withdrew from our service November 1 of last year.

The following deaths have occurred of members of the Society during the last six months:

October 29, 1910, Rev. Morton Dexter who had just been elected a member of the Society.

November 11, 1910, our venerable associate and benefactor, James F. Hunnewell.



INTERIOR VIEW OF NEW BUILDING.

January 18, 1911, Bishop Alexander H. Vinton.

February 6, 1911, Prof. Leonard P. Kinnicutt.

March 6, 1911, Judge Francis C. Lowell.

Notices of these gentlemen have been prepared for publication by the biographer.

The members of the Society who were present at the meeting last October had the opportunity to examine the new building which was then nearly finished, but unfurnished. The furnishings are now in place. A good illustrated description of the building written by the Librarian appeared in the *Worcester Magazine* for February.

The structure is, as you know, in the Georgian style of architecture, and is dignified and picturesque as looked at from the outside, and attractive and convenient within. The chief purpose of the exterior is to reproduce the general appearance of the first hall of the Society, still standing on Summer street, although neglected in condition and used for comparatively humble purposes.

The Council at its March meeting looked with favor upon a suggestion that a pamphlet of creditable aspect, with illustrations of the new building, should be prepared and distributed somewhat widely among persons interested in the objects of the Society; and it was thought that a suitable occasion for its issue would be the occurrence of the centennial meeting of the Society in October, 1912.

In contemplation of the results of the recent destructive fire in the Capitol at Albany in which treasures which cannot be replaced were burned, it is satisfactory to reflect that our building stands on a lot of 60,000 feet, and besides securing by its situation an abundance of light and room for enlargement, is carefully protected from fire from the outside and is also a fire-proof structure. To emphasize this statement I quote the closing passage of Mr. Brigham's article in the *Worcester Magazine*.

"The most satisfactory feature of the new building is that it is thoroughly fireproof. With the walls and floors and ceilings all of cement, steel or brick, and with

the book shelves and even much of the equipment of metal, there is no reason why the Society should ever fear this greatest destroyer of books. Nor, in view of the large amount of open area around the building, is there danger of a sweeping conflagration. Thus with protection from fire, and with a building splendidly equipped to take care of the growth of years, the Society takes on new life and seeks to increase its sphere of usefulness as a great library of reference for students of the history of America."

Thus no officer of the Society need feel the anxiety, when there is a fire in the neighborhood of our new building, which is said to have always been experienced by the former of our Presidents Salisbury when an alarm indicated a fire near the building we have just left.

The writer of this report distinctly recalls the features of the original building of this Society. His mother and Mr. Samuel F. Haven, the Librarian, had been neighbors and friends in Dedham, Mass., in their younger days and when the latter came to Worcester to live he was a frequent guest in our family and always received me, when as a boy I visited the building, with marked cordiality. What especially interested me, however, was not the books, but a room filled with antiquities, mainly American.

When Mr. Thomas gave his private library to the Antiquarian Society in the spring of 1813 he was requested to retain it in his possession until a suitable place could be prepared for its reception. In 1817 active measures were taken to procure funds to defray the expense of erecting a building for the library and cabinet by appointing committees to solicit subscriptions, but some difficulty was experienced in the attempt to raise the necessary money to carry out the plans. Early in the year 1819, however, Mr. Thomas offered to put up a building at his own expense for the accommodation of the Society and its library, and in August of that year a committee was appointed, at his request, to superintend its erection. The work was attended

to at once, and the central portion of the old Antiquarian Hall on Summer street was dedicated to the uses of the Society, August 24, 1820. The two wings were added to the main structure in 1832. The building, however, proved too small to house the growing library and was also found to be damp. The main portion of the building just vacated was therefore put up in 1853. But the rapidly increasing collection of books demanded still ampler accommodations, and an addition to the building was determined upon. That was finished in 1877. In putting up the building and adding to it, the Society was assisted by very generous contributions of money from the earlier Stephen Salisbury who was our President for thirty years.

The Council wishes to congratulate the Society upon the large and admirable results which have followed the thought and energetic labors of its principal officers, and to bespeak from all the members hearty co-operation in efforts for its increased prosperity.

SAMUEL SWETT GREEN,

*For the Council.*

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